

Communication Rules



Suggestions for More Effective Communication

Adapted by Debra Myers, Hearing Loss Association of East Texas
(with permission from Sam Trychin from his ***Communication Rules*** book).
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Some Things To Think About

- Hearing People and HOH People have Mutual Responsibility for Improving Communication.
- Most Hearing People Do Not Know How to Talk to a HOH Person.
- Most Hearing People will try to be helpful when they learn how to help.
- It helps if they know you're doing everything you can.



COMMUNICATION RULES

- Two Sets of specific Communication Rules
 - For Hearing people when communicating with HOH people
 - For HOH people when communicating with hearing people.



For a Hearing Person Communicating With a HOH Person

- Get the person's attention before you speak.
- Do not put obstacles in front of your face.
- Do not have objects in your mouth such as gum, cigarettes or food.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.



For a Hearing Person Communicating With a HOH Person ... Continued

- Use facial expressions and gestures.
- Give clues when changing the subject.
- Rephrase when you are not understood.
- Don't shout.



For a Hearing Person Communicating With a HOH Person ... Continued

- Avoid noisy background situations.
- Be patient, positive and relaxed.
- Talk to a HOH person, not about him or her.
- When in doubt, ask the HOH person for suggestions on how to improve communication.



For a HOH Person Communicating With a Hearing Person

- Pick the best spot to communicate by avoiding areas that are poorly lit and very noisy.
- Anticipate difficult situations and plan how to minimize problems.
- Tell others you have a hearing loss and explain how to best talk to you.



For a HOH Person Communicating With a Hearing Person ... Continued

- Pay attention to the speaker.
- Look for visual clues to what is being said.
- Ask for written clues of key words, if needed.



For a HOH Person Communicating With a Hearing Person ... Continued

- Do not bluff.
- Provide feedback
 - Don't just say, "Huh?" Tell them what you heard and what parts you missed.
 - Thank them for helping.



For a HOH Person Communicating With a Hearing Person ... Continued

- Arrange for frequent breaks if discussions or meetings are long.
- Try not to interrupt too often, but do interrupt when you need to.
- Set realistic goals about what you can expect to understand.



Summary

- There's a lot you can do to improve communications.
- Others can and will help when they know how.
- It's up to you to take the initiative.
- Hearing loss is not a "Spectator Sport".